

378 The President's News Conference of
September 13, 1962

THE PRESIDENT. I have a preliminary statement.

[1.] There has been a great deal of talk on the situation in Cuba in recent days both in the Communist camp and in our own, and I would like to take this opportunity to set the matter in perspective.

In the first place, it is Mr. Castro and his supporters who are in trouble. In the last year his regime has been increasingly isolated from this hemisphere. His name no longer inspires the same fear or following in other Latin American countries. He has been condemned by the OAS, excluded from the Inter-American Defense Board, and kept out of the Free Trade Association. By his own monumental economic mismanagement, supplemented by our refusal to trade with him, his economy has crumbled, and his pledges for economic progress have been discarded, along with his pledges for political freedom. His industries are stagnating, his harvests are declining, his own followers are beginning to see that their revolution has been betrayed.

So it is not surprising that in a frantic effort to bolster his regime he should try to arouse the Cuban people by charges of an imminent American invasion, and commit himself still further to a Soviet takeover in the hope of preventing his own collapse.

Ever since communism moved into Cuba in 1958, Soviet technical and military personnel have moved steadily onto the island in increasing numbers at the invitation of the Cuban Government.

Now that movement has been increased. It is under our most careful surveillance. But I will repeat the conclusion that I reported last week: that these new shipments do not constitute a serious threat to any other part of this hemisphere.

If the United States ever should find it necessary to take military action against communism in Cuba, all of Castro's Com-

munist-supplied weapons and technicians would not change the result or significantly extend the time required to achieve that result.

However, unilateral military intervention on the part of the United States cannot currently be either required or justified, and it is regrettable that loose talk about such action in this country might serve to give a thin color of legitimacy to the Communist pretense that such a threat exists. But let me make this clear once again: If at any time the Communist buildup in Cuba were to endanger or interfere with our security in any way, including our base at Guantanamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missile and space activities at Cape Canaveral, or the lives of American citizens in this country, or if Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force against any nation in this hemisphere, or become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union, then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies.

We shall be alert, too, and fully capable of dealing swiftly with any such development. As President and Commander in Chief I have full authority now to take such action, and I have asked the Congress to authorize me to call up reserve forces should this or any other crisis make it necessary.

In the meantime, we intend to do everything within our power to prevent such a threat from coming into existence.

Our friends in Latin America must realize the consequences such developments hold out for their own peace and freedom, and we shall be making further proposals to them. Our friends in NATO must realize the implications of their ships engaging in the Cuban trade.

We shall continue to work with Cuban refugee leaders who are dedicated as we are

to that nation's future return to freedom. We shall continue to keep the American people and the Congress fully informed. We shall increase our surveillance of the whole Caribbean area. We shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in this hemisphere.

With this in mind, while I recognize that rash talk is cheap, particularly on the part of those who do not have the responsibility, I would hope that the future record will show that the only people talking about a war or an invasion at this time are the Communist spokesmen in Moscow and Havana, and that the American people defending as we do so much of the free world, will in this nuclear age, as they have in the past, keep both their nerve and their head.

Q. Mr. President, coupling this statement with the one of last week, at what point do you determine that the buildup in Cuba has lost its defensive character and become offensive? Would it take an overt act?

THE PRESIDENT. I think if you read last week's statement¹ and the statement today, I made it quite clear, particularly in last week's statement, when we talked about the presence of offensive military missile capacity or development of military bases and other indications which I gave last week, all those would, of course, indicate a change in the nature of the threat.

Q. Well, Mr. President, in this same line, have you set for yourself any rule or set of conditions at which you will determine the existence of an offensive rather than a defensive force in Cuba, and, in that same connection, in your reading of the Monroe Doctrine, how do you define "intervention"? Will it require force to contravene the Monroe Doctrine or does the presence of a foreign power in any force, but not using that force in this hemisphere, amount to contravention of the Doctrine?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I have indicated that if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive actions against the

United States, that the United States would act. I've also indicated that the United States would not permit Cuba to export its power by force in the hemisphere. The United States will make appropriate military judgments after consultation with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others, after carefully analyzing whatever new information comes in, as to whether that point has been reached where an offensive threat does exist. And at that time the country and the Congress will be so notified.

[2.] Q. Would you state, sir, whether or not the United States has given export licenses for the export of U-2 aircraft to other nations, other than Nationalist China? And if so, what is our policy?

THE PRESIDENT. No, we have not. These export licenses were given, as you know, in July of 1960, and were sold to the Nationalist Chinese Government. And we have no plans to sell any further ones or grant any other export licenses.

[3.] Q. Mr. President, would you comment, please, on the Soviet announcement that they apparently will shelve discussion on Berlin until after our elections in November?

THE PRESIDENT. I thought that the leaders of both political parties in the Congress indicated very clearly that on this matter of Berlin there was not a political division within the United States, and that our position in Berlin, which carries over a long commitment, stretching back through many years, several administrations, would not be affected by whatever the results may be in the November election.

[4.] Q. Mr. President, could you tell us why the Alliance for Progress has not made more progress in the past year on Latin American problems, in your judgment?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, the Alliance for Progress is a tremendous effort which is, by the united effort of the free countries of Latin America and the United States, to attempt to bring about an increase in the standard of living and the opportunities for the peoples of Latin America.

¹ Item 352 [14, 17].

Latin America has been neglected for many, many years. I would hope that a good many Americans who are particularly concerned about Cuba today would also take a very careful look at the very low standard of living of much of Latin America, the bad housing, the unemployment, the bad health of so many of the people there. We are engaged in a monumental task in attempting to increase the standard of living of the people of Latin America, and we have available for that purpose a good deal less money than we had available for the rebuilding of Europe, which had a highly developed labor force, great technical skills, and which required only an infusion to provide an increase over the prewar standard of living.

Here we do not have the technical skills. We do not have the planning staffs. We have, in a sense, neglected Latin America, so that we are engaged in a tremendous operation with insufficient resources. And I think we are moving ahead since Punta del Este. But there's an awful lot of business left unfinished, and will be for some time. You cannot remake the face of Latin America overnight and provide better opportunity.

In addition, I'm very anxious that the countries of Western Europe, particularly the Common Market, will concern themselves with Latin America. Latin America depends on its export markets to Europe in order to maintain its economy.

Latin America has had a flight of capital in recent months which has been serious. In addition, the price of its primary products has also dropped in recent months. So that even the assistance we have given has not been enough to keep Latin America even, and particularly when its population increase amounts to almost 3 percent. So we're faced with staggering problems in Latin America and I hope that in our concentration on the particular problem which I discussed at the opening, we will extend our view and realize that what's at stake here is the freedom of a good many countries which are in very dire straits today.

[5.] Q. What did you think, sir, of the rather harsh things that Republican Congressman Joel Broyhill in nearby Virginia had to say about you and your Press Secretary because Mr. Salinger gave a party last night for his Democratic opponent?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I can see why he would be quite critical of that, but I will say that I've never read as much about a Congressman who's in the paper as I do about that Congressman and see less legislative results. [Laughter]

[6.] Q. Mr. President, Martin Luther King has telegraphed you asking for Federal action against anti-Negro terrorism in the South, and at least one Negro organization has threatened to picket you with the allegation that the Federal Government has not done enough. Could you tell us whether you have answered Dr. King, and give us the thought that you gave him, and whether you can say that or not, can you give us a comment on the problem?

THE PRESIDENT. We are in contact with Dr. King and others who have communicated to us about it. I don't know any more outrageous action which I have seen occur in this country for a good many months or years than the burning of a church—two churches—because of the effort made by Negroes to be registered to vote.

The United States Constitution provides for freedom to vote, and this country must permit every man and woman to exercise their franchise. To shoot, as we saw in the case of Mississippi, two young people who were involved in an effort to register people, to burn churches as a reprisal, with all of the provisions of the United States Constitution—at least the basic provision of the Constitution guaranteeing freedom of worship—I consider both cowardly as well as outrageous. The United States now has a number of FBI agents in there, and as soon as we are able to find out who did it, we'll arrest them and we'll bring them before a jury, and I'm sure that they'll be appropriately dealt with.

But let me say that nothing, I think—and I'm sure this is the view of the people of the States—the right to vote is very basic. If we're going to neglect that right, then all of our talk about freedom is hollow, and therefore we shall give every protection that we can to anybody seeking to vote. I hope everybody will register in this country. I hope they will vote. I commend those who are making the effort to register every citizen. They deserve the protection of the United States Government, the protection of the State, the protection of local communities, and we shall do everything we possibly can to make sure that that protection is assured and if it requires extra legislation and extra force, we shall do that.

[7.] Q. Sir, in connection with the Chicago Northwestern Railway strike, how long do you believe such a major transportation tieup can be allowed to run on before the public interest requires Presidential intervention or congressional action?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, as you know, we exhausted the procedures of the Railway Labor Act in that case. The only provision which is available to us would be the Taft-Hartley under a finding that the national interest and security was affected, so that we would have to make that legal judgment. It's my understanding that representatives of both of these parties have been meeting with Mr. Wirtz during the last few days, and that some progress has been made.

I think it's very important that the parties come to an agreement immediately because there are great interests of nine States affected: a good many farm crops, which should be coming to harvest, which are in the field—and public welfare suggests that these two important groups come to a conclusion, I would hope, over the weekend.

I am hopeful of it, and, as I say, the latest report I had today was that progress had been made. So I'm hopeful that both sides will make the sufficient concessions, if that's the word, to permit an agreement, because the public interest suggests an agreement is due.

[8.] Q. Mr. President, it was generally understood that the current test series would be over by now and it now appears that the atmosphere tests may continue on into November. Can you tell us why this decision was made to continue?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, there're two reasons. One is that, as you know, because of the blowup in the pad at Johnston Island and because of the earlier failures of the communications system in the missile, we are not able to carry out these tests which were the most—among the most important, if not the most important, of our series. So we're going to finish those.

In addition, as a result of the earlier tests of this Dominick series, there were certain things learned which we would like to prove out. So that we have agreed to a limited number of tests in concluding the Dominick series. And also we have taken some steps to prevent a repetition of the incident which caused an increase in the number of electrons in the atmosphere, by lowering the altitude and the yield so that lunar flights will not be further endangered.

[9.] Q. Mr. President, can you tell us whether you discussed the Cuban situation with General Eisenhower on Monday, and, if you did, whether there was any agreement between U.S. party leaders that it shouldn't be an issue in this fall's campaign?

THE PRESIDENT. We discussed all problems, and, of course, that was one of them, but I didn't request any such agreement from him.

[10.] Q. Mr. President, in connection with your plans for next month, do you think you will find time to visit the National Automobile Show in Detroit?

THE PRESIDENT. I'm hopeful I will. Yes, I think I might.

[11.] Q. Mr. President, in the recent Soviet statement on Cuba, the Russians implied that perhaps the main reason the United States is so exercised about Cuba now is because of our election coming up. I'd like to ask you if you agree with this premise, and, more pointedly, do you think that the

Republicans are going to make political hay out of Cuba?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I would not want to comment on the extent of the Soviet knowledge of our pre-elective process, nor would I suggest that the concern over Cuba is due to the election. I think that the concern is due to the fact that Cuba is close to the United States territory and that Cuba is obviously tying itself closer to the Communist bloc. The arrival of these weapons and technicians has caused increasing alarm by not only the Members of Congress but also by the administration and by the American people. I would think that it's part of our serious problems in which we are engaged in a tense concentration in many parts of the world at a dangerous time and it's quite natural that this action would bring a good deal of concern. I would not suggest that those who are concerned about it are motivated by political purposes or that the Soviet judgment that they are is accurate.

[12.] Q. Mr. President, in view of your intention to try to close some tax loopholes next year, do you find either the House or the Senate version of H.R. 10 acceptable this year?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I want to wait until the conference, and of course the Senate version is much more acceptable than the House version, but even the Senate version requires some careful analysis and I'm sure—I think it would be more useful to wait until after the conference and then make a judgment as to whether we should go ahead with this bill or whether we should wait until the general reform of next year.

[13.] Q. Mr. President, the same Soviet statement which was mentioned earlier implied that the Soviet Union might intervene militarily on the side of Cuba in the event the United States was forced to take military action. Would this implied threat be a major factor in any decision you might be called upon to make?

THE PRESIDENT. No, the United States will take whatever action the situation, as I described it, would require. As far as the

threat, the United States has been living with threats for a good many years and in a good many parts of the world. But the United States will not take any action that the situation does not require and will take whatever action the situation does require along the grounds which I indicated in my opening statement.

[14.] Q. Mr. President, in the area of peaceful uses of space, you've said that we shall be first, but if we refrain from competing with Russia for warlike space vehicles, as Mr. Gilpatrick has said, doesn't this almost condemn us to a second place finish in the military field?

THE PRESIDENT. No. As I said last week, in the first place we're spending \$1,500 million a year on our military space program.¹ What is key for the success both of peaceful exploration of space as well as the military mastery of space are large boosters, effective control of the capsule, the ability to rendezvous, and all of the rest, so that there is an obvious usefulness if the situation should require—military usefulness for our efforts, peaceful efforts, in space.

There is no sense—in addition, as you know, very recently we determined to go ahead with the Titan III, which gives the United States Air Force a very strong weapon if that should become necessary. So that the work that NASA is doing on Saturn, the work the Air Force is doing on Titan, the work that's being done on the Apollo program and Gemini and the others, all have a national security factor as well as a peaceful factor.

Q. Mr. President, could you say a little more about what Mr. Gilpatrick meant by allowing the Russians to go first with hydrogen weapons in space?

THE PRESIDENT. I'm not aware that we're intending the Russians to go first with hydrogen weapons.

Q. He said we wouldn't go until they did.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think the United States is attempting, and this administration,

¹ See Item 340 [51].

as you know, is making a very massive effort in space. As I said, we are spending three times what we spent last year in space, and more in this year's budget than the 8 previous years, so that this is a tremendous effort, \$5½ billion as well as the money that we're spending for the military use of space.

As I say, the size of the booster, the capsule, and the control all would have, if the situation required it, a military use. We hope it does not; we hope that space will be used for peaceful purposes. That is the policy of the United States Government. But we should be prepared if it does not. In addition, as I've said from the beginning, both the Soviet Union and the United States both have a capacity today to send a missile to each other's country with a nuclear warhead on it. So that we must keep some perspective as to where the danger may lie. But the United States, in the effort it's making both in the peaceful program and the military program, all of this will increase our security if the Soviet Union should attempt to use space for military purposes.

[15.] Q. Mr. President, Robert Frost, the poet, recently came back from a trip to Russia and said he had a message from Premier Khrushchev for you. I think the American people would like to know what that message was, and what message he might have taken over from you to Premier Khrushchev. Would you tell us what that was?

THE PRESIDENT. No, he didn't take a message, except the message of his own personality and poetry, to Russia and to Mr. Khrushchev, and his character. I have not received his message, though I hope to see him shortly, and if I do, I wil' if it's—I'm sure I'll be glad to communicate it to you and to the American people.

[16.] Q. Mr. President, you mentioned in your opening statement that proposals might be made to the Latin American countries. Could you give us some idea of your philosophy of what the Latin American

countries' role should be in this Cuban situation?

THE PRESIDENT. No, I think it would be more appropriate—as you know, Mr. Rusk plans to meet with them this month at the time the General Assembly opens, and I think it would be more appropriate for they and he to meet and confer on the matter, and at that time we will have some suggestions.

[17.] Q. Mr. President, have you received any response from the Soviet Union to indicate that they are, in fact, considering cooperative ventures with the United States in space, other than those negotiated earlier in satellite weather research by the late Dr. Harry Wexler? If not, are you still hopeful that such cooperation is likely in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT. No. As you know, Dr. Dryden had some conversations in Geneva in regard to the matter, and some progress was made, but it's limited in its scope and we would hope more could be done. And more, perhaps, could be done if the atmosphere between the two countries should be improved.

[18.] Q. Mr. President, you said in your opening statement that you now had full authority to act in the Cuban affair. In view of this, do you think there's any virtue in the Senate or the Congress passing the resolution saying you have that authority?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I think the Members of Congress would, speaking as they do with a particular responsibility—I think it would be useful, if they desired to do so, for them to express their view. And as I've seen the resolutions which have been discussed—a resolution which I think Senator Mansfield introduced and which Chairman Vinson introduced in the House—and I would think that—I'd be very glad to have those resolutions passed if that should be the desire of the Congress.

[19.] Q. Mr. President, will you tell us some of your thinking on your request for special reserve mobilization powers? The international situation has led you twice to request such special legislation. You could

call a million reservists if you declared a national emergency. Why don't you do that?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think there're several stages of a possible crisis. The call of a national emergency, I would say, is near the final step of a crisis. But there may be increased threats which would require us to call some reservists, particularly in the air, maybe at sea, possibly on the ground. Last year, when we called the reservists, the two divisions, the Wisconsin and Texas Divisions, we also laid plans for making two more divisions permanent, which came into effect this summer—August and September—so that those two divisions served a purpose of giving us this reserve during the period of the crisis at that time, and at the end of it we had two permanent divisions.

We have, as you know, of course, increased our Army strength from 11 to 16 divisions in the last year and a half. Now, if we need—of course, if we're in a national emergency, where the United States is threatened with very serious military action, of course there would be no hesitancy in declaring it. But we might be in a situation where the declaration of a national emergency might not be the most appropriate step, and in that case we would use the power granted to us by the Congress.

Q. Mr. President, in that connection, your request for only 150,000 reservists would seem to not enforce the opinion expressed because it seems no stage at all.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think that—

Q. You said that you've strengthened the Armed Forces.

THE PRESIDENT. That's correct. Then we have 150,000 more than we could call. They could be in very critical areas. As I have said, the air and the sea are two, and, of course, there could be Guard divisions called. If the United States were obliged to reinforce its forces any place, the ability to call up needed men would make an appreciable difference. Now, as I say, we always have the final weapon, or nearly final weapon, of a national emergency and the power to call

a million men. But the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense felt that this intermediate step could be very useful during the period when Congress is out of session.

[20.] Q. This question concerns the aerospace dispute. As you know, the auto-workers and the machinists unions have accepted the Presidential board's recommendation, and recommendations, sir, which I believe you have also found acceptable as a basis for settlement. The four leading aerospace manufacturers, especially Lockheed, have rejected the basic union shop recommendation. Now the unions feel they are being forced into a strike posture, as a result of the company's attitude. Could you tell us something of your opinion and your reaction to the situation and what the equities in this area are?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, in the first place, most major industrial companies or industries in the United States have accepted the union shop many years ago—the steel industry, the auto industry, the aluminum companies, other basic industries. The union shop is part of collective bargaining and particularly under the terms suggested by Dr. Taylor—a two-thirds vote—people do not have to join the union to get the job. After they've come to work, if it's an opinion of a large majority of the members, then they would join the union. This, as I say, has been acceptable for many years to many companies which are even larger than the ones that are involved. That's the first point.

Now the second point is that the total package, it seems to me, should be considered as a package. The economic proposals made are not excessive. They come well within the guidelines suggested by the Council of Economic Advisers. The unions are accepting a financial settlement which is not particularly generous in relation to certain other unions in recent years. They feel that the total package, however, is acceptable. I would hope the companies would accept it, because if a strike comes, in view of the fact that the recommendation of the fact-finding board headed by Dr. Taylor,

who also was given a comparable assignment by President Eisenhower in the steel strike case—which indicates his own high reputation and that of the panel—I would hope that the companies would accept it, because if there is a strike, the responsibility would be very clear, I think, to the American people for such an action. I would hope there wouldn't be a strike, that business would go on, that the companies would accept the report.

[21.] Q. Mr. President, do you favor the election of every Democratic candidate for Congress? How many seats do you feel you need in the Senate and the House to get a Congress that will put across your legislative program?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I would be glad to go through the names with you. I've said from the beginning that I would probably be supporting any Congressman who was interested in my support. I think there are probably some Democrats who might not be particularly anxious for my support and, therefore, my endorsement would not be required across the board. Those Congressmen who are interested in my supporting them are usually people who hold the same general view of the necessity for this country making progress that I do.

Now, secondly, this Congress is ending. I think that it is somewhat like Lazarus. It has revived. It's moving and we are going to see the session end, in my opinion, with the passage of a good trade bill, with a tax bill which will come out of the conference, I hope a higher education bill, and a good many other bills which 2 months ago seemed to be in the deep freeze. So I think that we're making progress.

What I think is important is because these votes—and we will get a farm bill, I hope—because these votes are so close, because their program is opposed by the opposition party,

almost across the board, and because some Democrats join, I would hope that we could hold the number of seats we have and perhaps pick some up, even though I recognize that it's going to be a very intensely fought election.

[22.] Q. Sir, when you went to Houston the other day you didn't take along Congressman Casey whose district you went to; and you also didn't take along Senator Yarborough from Texas. I wonder why you did this and I also wonder if you were motivated in leaving Casey at home because he had opposed you on some issues.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, you say I didn't take Senator Yarborough, and he and I have been in close concert so, of course, the reason was not that which you have suggested. We did not take any Congressman or Senator along to Florida though we visited it. We didn't take any Congressman or Senator along to Alabama because this was a program trip.

Q. One was already there, wasn't he?

THE PRESIDENT. Oh, yes, and we invited all the Congressmen and Senators who were in the districts to come with us on the trip. For example, Senator Long from Missouri, came with us to the McDonnell plant. We would have been glad to have anyone come. But we invited the members of the Space Committees of the House and Senate, the ranking Democrat and Republican. We also brought Congressman Thomas along, who is Chairman of the Appropriations Committee for the space program. And that was the total invitation because this was a nonpolitical trip.

Reporter: Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: President Kennedy's forty-third news conference was held in the State Department Auditorium at 6 o'clock on Wednesday evening, September 13, 1962.

DRAFT FOLLOWS

Sept. 13

Cuba

Draft statement on Cuba for press conference Sept. 13

The situation in Cuba has been the subject of some foolish remarks in recent days, and I want to set the matter in perspective.

First: Over the last four years, the regime of Fidel Castro has increasingly committed itself to domestic tyranny and to cooperation with foreign Communism. This betrayal of a revolution which at first had popular support in Cuba has been consistently opposed by the United States in two Administrations. In the last year, in particular, Castro has been increasingly isolated, and today it is he and his supporters who are in real trouble -- it is not the rest of us in the hemisphere. Castro's name no longer inspires the earlier fear or following in other Latin American countries. He has been increasingly isolated from the rest of the hemisphere -- condemned by the OAS -- excluded from the Defense Board -- and kept out of the Free Trade Association. By his own monumental economic mismanagement, supplemented by our amply justified refusal to trade with him, his economy has crumbled and his pledges for economic progress have been discarded along with his pledges for political freedom. His industries stagnate; his harvests decline; his own followers begin to see the light -- so it is not surprising that in a frantic effort to bolster his regime he should try to arouse the Cuban people by charges of imminent U. S. invasion, and commit himself still further as a cat's -paw of the Soviet Union. This increasing commitment is a matter

which we are watching most carefully, and whatever actions may be necessary will be taken, but the immediate points which we must not forget¹⁵ is that the Castro regime is a dismal failure.

Second: The recent increases in shipments of arms and material to Cuba do not constitute a serious threat to any other part of the hemisphere. Last week in a White House statement I gave a complete, up-to-date account of what has been delivered, and the American people are entitled to know that the United States Government has better and more complete information on these matters than any private or unofficial source. We shall continue to maintain the necessary careful and intensive surveillance of Cuba. These new shipments have no important impact on the balance of power in the Caribbean. If the United States should ever find it necessary to take military action against Communism in Cuba, all of Castro's Communist-supplied weapons and technicians would not change the result by 24 hours.

Third: No propagandist bluff from outside the hemisphere will have any effect whatever on our judgments and decisions with respect to Cuba. Statements of this kind are irresponsible and empty, and will be met in the United States with the contempt which they deserve.

Fourth: The situation in Cuba does not currently require or justify military intervention by the U. S., by invasion, or by blockade. We have no such intention. The Communist pretense of such a threat is a sham, and I am sorry that it has been given even a thin color of legitimacy by a few irresponsible proposals which may be explained by anger, but cannot be justified in the national interest.

Fifth: Meanwhile, as I said last week, "It continues to be the policy of the United States that the Castro regime will not be allowed to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force. It will be prevented by whatever means may be necessary from taking action against any part of the Western Hemisphere." And, as I also said last week, we shall be alert to deal effectively with any development of a "significant offensive capability either in Cuban hands or under Soviet direction and guidance." We are fully capable of dealing with any such development, and we will.

Sixth: Other steps are under way. Our friends in Latin America must realize the consequences such developments hold out for their own peace and freedom. Our friends in NATC must realize the military implications of their ships ferrying Sovietsarms and men. We shall continue to work with those refugee leaders dedicated as we are to that island's future return to freedom. We shall continue to keep the American people and the Congress fully informed.

We shall increase our surveillance of the whole Caribbean area.

We shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in that area.

We shall make no barter, no "deal", no compromise of American principles or security. And with that in mind, I would hope that the future record will show that the only people talking about a war or an invasion at this time are the Communist spokesmen in Moscow and Havana and a handful of hot-heads in this country who have neither the facts nor the responsibility. I am confident that bipartisan unity and an attitude of cool strength on the part of the responsible leaders of both parties will prevail.

DRAFT FOLLOWS

TCS - Press Conference
9/13/62

There has been a great deal of talk on the situation in Cuba in recent days -- both in the Communist camp and in our own -- and I would like to take this opportunity to set the matter in a cool and factual perspective.

In the first place, it is Mr. Castro and his supporters who are in real trouble. In the last year his regime has been increasingly isolated from this hemisphere. His name no longer inspires the same fear or following in other Latin countries. He has been condemned by the OAS, excluded from the Inter-American Defense Board and kept out of the Free Trade Association. By his own monumental economic mismanagement, supplemented by our refusal to trade with him, his economy has crumbled; and his pledges for economic progress have been discarded, along with his pledges for political freedom. His industries are stagnating; his harvests are declining; his own followers are beginning to see that their revolution has been betrayed. So it is not surprising that ⁱⁿ a frantic effort to bolster his regime he should try to arouse the Cuban people by charges of an imminent U. S. invasion, and commit himself still further to a Soviet take-over in the hope of preventing his own collapse.

Ever since Communism moved into Cuba in 1958, Soviet technical and military personnel have moved steadily onto the island in increasing numbers at the invitation of the Cuban government. Now that movement has been increased. It is under our most careful surveillance.

But I will repeat the conclusion I reported last week that these new shipments do not constitute a serious threat to any other part of this hemisphere. If the United States ever should find it necessary to take military action against Communism in Cuba, all of Castro's Communist-supplied weapons and technicians would not change the result or significantly extend the time required to achieve that result.

However, unilateral military intervention on the part of the United States cannot currently be either required or justified; and it is regrettable that loose talk about such action in this country might serve to give a thin color of legitimacy to the Communist pretense that such a threat exists.

But let me make this clear once again: if at any time the Communist build-up in Cuba were to endanger or interfere with our security in any way -- including our base at Guantanamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missile and space activities at Cape Canaveral, or the lives of American citizens in this country -- or if Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force against any nation in this hemisphere, or become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union -- then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security. We shall be alert to and fully capable of dealing swiftly with any such development; as President and Commander in Chief, I have full authority now to take such action; and I have asked the Congress to authorize me to call up reserve forces should this or any other crisis make it necessary. In the meantime we intend to do everything within our power to prevent such a threat from coming into existence.

Our friends in Latin America must realize the consequences such developments hold out for their own peace and freedom, and we shall be making further proposals to them. Our friends in NATO must realize the implications of their ships ferrying Soviet arms and men. We shall continue to work with Cuban refugee leaders who are dedicated, as we are, to that island's future return to freedom. We shall continue to keep the American people and the Congress fully informed. We shall increase our surveillance of the ~~whole~~ whole Caribbean area. We shall make no barter, no "deal", no compromise of American principles or security. We shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in this hemisphere.

With this in mind -- while I recognize that rash talk is ~~cheap~~ cheap particularly on the part of those who have no responsibility -- I would hope that the future record will show that the only people talking about a war or an invasion at this time are the Communist spokesmen in Moscow and Havana; and that the American people will continue to recognize where the real military danger to this country is located.

DRAFT FOLLOWS

FILE

Cuba

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This is a time to be calm and cool and, above all, quiet about the situation in Cuba. Let those who have had to back down on their threats to West Berlin and their pledges for Cuban prosperity resort to shrill statements about invasion and war.

For it is Mr. Castro and his supporters who are in real trouble, not the United States. His name no longer inspires the same fear or following in other Latin countries. He has been increasingly isolated from the rest of the Hemisphere -- condemned by the OAS, excluded from the Defense Board and kept out of the Free Trade Association. Largely as the result of our own economic embargo, his economy has crumbled and his pledges for economic progress have been discarded along with his pledges for political freedom. As his industries stagnate, his harvests decline and his own followers grumble about rationing, it should not be surprising that Mr. Castrol in his efforts to bolster his regime, arouses the Cuban people to fear a U. S. invasion and begs the Soviets to send both military and economic help to prop him up.

Ever since Communism moved into Cuba and thereby into this hemisphere in 1958, Soviet military personnel have moved steadily onto the island in increasing numbers -- not as invaders of conquest but at the invitation of the Cuban government. Now that movement has been increased. But by spreading his economic burden to the shortage-ridden Soviet economy while

further antagonizing his own people with these unwelcome guests, Mr. Castro, I predict, is only postponing his eventual internal eclipse.

I hope, therefore, that the American people, regardless of party, will put in perspective some of the extreme statements now being issued. On the one hand are those who play into Mr. Castro's hands by advocating an act of war on the part of the United States. Let us be clear about that; a naval blockade of the island, an embargo which could be enforced only by stopping Soviet ships, an attack on Cuban installations or a full-scale or limited invasion would be considered to be an act of war. In the absence of a more direct threat to our security and the cooperation of other hemispheric nations, it would also constitute a violation of our obligations to the United Nations and the Inter-American system. I believe that those who support any such move should make it clear to the American people that they are advocating an act of war -- that they do not know what the response of the Communist bloc will be, against, Berlin, against Formosa, against South Korea, South Vietnam, the Middle East or the United States mainland itself. They do not know how many lives will be lost -- how many innocent Cubans would perish -- or in how many Latin countries Communism and Castroism would spring up anew if we blotted it out in Cuba.

Rash talk is cheap on the part of those who have no concern for danger spots in other parts of the globe, no information on what is really going on in Cuba, and no responsibility for the lives of American soldiers and citizens. But until Mr. Castro possesses weapons which present a clear and present danger to the security of the United States, which he does not possess today, I question whether the American people will listen to those who would endanger the peace, endanger millions of lives and wreck all the positive steps we have taken in Latin America by rushing us into an unnecessary war with the wrong enemy.

On the other extreme, the Soviet Union apparently holds to the view that this nation should or can do nothing to protect its own security regarding Cuba. But let me make this clear once again: if at any time the Communist build-up in Cuba were to endanger or interfere with our base at Guantanamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missile and space activities at Cape Canaveral, or the lives of American citizens in this country -- or if Cuba should ever be used as the base for an armed aggression against any Latin country protected by our treaty obligations, or become an offensive military base for the Soviet Union -- then regardless of the risk, the cost and the opinions of others, this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security. As President and Commander in Chief, I have full authority now to take such action; and I have asked the Congress to authorize me to call up reserve forces should this or any other crisis make it necessary.

Such a threat does not exist today -- and we intend to do everything within our power to prevent its coming into existence. Other steps are under way. Our friends in Latin America must realize the consequences such developments hold out for their own peace and freedom. Our friends in NATO must realize the military implications of their ships ferrying Soviet arms and men. We shall continue to work with those refugee leaders dedicated as we are to that island's future return to freedom. We shall continue to keep the American people and the Congress fully informed. We shall increase our surveillance of the whole Caribbean area. We shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in that area. We shall make no barter, no "deal", no compromise of American principles or security. And with that in mind, I would hope that the future record will show that the only people talking about a war or an invasion at this time are the Communist spokesmen in Moscow and Havana and a handful of hot-heads in this country who have neither the facts nor the responsibility. I am confident that bi-partisan unity and an attitude of cool strength on the part of the responsible leaders of both parties will prevail.